PAPERS READ

BEFORE THE

LANCASTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 3, 1911.

"History herself, as seen in her own workshop."

THE EARLY ABOLITIONISTS OF LANCASTER COUNTY.

MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING.

VOL. XV. NO. 3.

PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER COPY.

LANCASTER, PA.
1911.

PAPERS READ

BEFORE THE

LANCASTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 3, 1911.

"History herself, as seen in her own workshop."

THE EARLY ABOLITIONISTS OF LANCASTER COUNTY.

MINUTES OF MARCH MEETING.

VOL. XV. NO. 3.

PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER COPY.

LANCASTER, PA.
1911.

The Early Abolitionists of Lancaster County - - - 69
By Thomas Whitson, Esq.

Minutes of the March Meeting - - - - - 86

The Early Abolitionists of Lancaster County.

In giving a history of the Abolition movement in Lancaster county, or elsewhere, the question seems first to arise, what is specially meant by the term "Abolitionist." The indiscriminate manner in which it was used sixty years ago against every person who in any manner sympathized with the anti-slavery movement leaves me somewhat in doubt as to what phase of the subject I am supposed to treat. In fact, I am reminded very much of a speech I heard made by Thaddeus Stevens when yet a small boy. It was in the Congressional campaign of 1858, when Mr. Stevens was a candidate for Congress from this district. The peroration of his speech was substantially as follows. I quote from memory:

"But in answer to all this I hear one reply, namely, Stevens is an Abolitionist. The indiscriminate manner with which the term is used, I am frank to confess, leaves me somewhat in doubt as to what is meant by it. But the venom and spleen with which it is hurled at some of us would indicate, at least, that it is a term of reproach and used only against monsters and outlaws of society. If it is meant by an Abolitionist that I am one of those terrible, heinous-looking animals with cloven hoofs and horns, such as is described in legend and fiction, and in Milton's "Paradise Lost," I am not very handsome, to be sure, but I don't think I am one of those. If it is meant by the term Abolitionist that I am one

of those depraved degenerates and outlaws of society who endangers his neighbor's property by committing arson and robbery, etc., while making no professional claims to righteousness, I am sure I am not one of those. If it is meant by the term that I am one of those sacrilegious and irreverent beings who would destroy society, substitute anarchy and annul all laws of religion and virtue, I am not very pious to be sure, but I don't think I am one of those. But if it is meant by an Abolitionist that I am one who is opposed to the institution of slavery everywhere, wherever it exists, all over the face of this earth, whether in the United States of America, or in the frozen regions of Russia and Siberia, or in the Latin nations of South America, under whatever guise and form, and whatever name it may bear, and who, if he had the power and right, would abolish it to-morrow in any and all of these nations, in any form whatsoever that it may have assumed—if they mean by that an Abolitionist, then, fellow citizens, they have called me by my right name."

But to speak more definitely of the various phases of the anti-slavery movement which existed in Lancaster county as it began to crystallize after the passage of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, I think it might be fairly divided into two general parts: First, The more strenuous and uncompromising ones who afterward became known as Garrison Abolitionists, who would admit of no compromise and asserted that immediate and unconditional freedom was the right of the slave, without regard to consequences; second, those of various opinions who held slavery to be a social, moral and political evil, but held that its abolition should be worked out by the States themselves, and through the

powers of the General Government to restrain its further spread and introduction in the national territories. The latter class might again be properly sub-divided into two classes, namely: Those who would vote for no one but the absolute avowed "Free Soil," or "Liberty," candidates, and those who still believed in the efficacy of party organization and held on to and co-operated with the old Whig party until it was entirely absorbed by the slave power, becoming entirely subservient to its behests. Its national platform in 1852 showed practically no distinction between its utterances and those of the Democratic party on the question of slavery; the result of which was, as known to all men, the triumphant election of Pierce in that campaign and the over-whelming defeat of General Scott, the conqueror of Mexico, the candidate of the Whig party.

An Early Trio.

Of the first class mentioned, in the formation of the American Anti-slavery Society, which met in Philadelphia in November, 1833, and signed the constitution thereof, three were from Lancaster county: Lindley Coates and Thomas Whitson, both of Sadsbury township, and James Miller McKim, a young Presbyterian minister from Columbia. Of these three men John G. Whittier has given the following brief pen portraits:

"That tall, gaunt, swarthy man, erect, eagle-faced, upon whose somewhat martial figure the Quaker coat seemed a little out of place, was Lindley Coates.

"Thomas Whitson, father of the author of the Hicksite school of Friends, fresh from his farm in Lancaster county, dressed in plainest homespun, his tall form surmounted

by a shock of unkempt hair, the odd obliquity of his vision contrasting strongly with the clearness and directness of his spiritual insight.

"The youngest man present was, I believe, James Miller McKim, a Presbyterian minister from Columbia,afterward one of our most efficient workers."

Of these three men, Lindley Coates afterwards became a member of the Constitutional Convenaion of 1837. He was one of three members of that convention who voted against the insertion of the word "white" in the clause defining the right of suffrage in Pennsylvania. His two colleagues in that negative vote were Thaddeus Stevens, a delegate from Adams county, and Thomas Earle, of Philadelphia, grandfather of the present George H. Earle, Jr., of financial reputation in that city, and father of Mrs. Phoebe Earle Gibbons.

Mr. Coates, as a reward for his antagonism to the bands of kidnapers who infested his neighborhood, about 1850, had his barn reduced to ashes.

Thomas Whitson had presented to him, in the fall of '51, on the occasion of the Christiana riot, when lawless bandits terrorized the neighborhood under the guise of Deputy United States Marshals, the alternative of recalling the assertion that he was an Abolitionist, or his brains blown out at the point of a revolver. Friend Whitson preferred the latter, and said fairly to his assailant with force, as directly as his oblique vision would carry the words to the eye of his assailant, that he would never deny that he was an Abolitionist. Conscience, always more powerful than bayonets, triumphed in that case, as in all others, and the weapon of the would-be assassin dropped from its aim with trigger unpulled. This story the late

Hon. Anthony E. Roberts, who was United States Marshal on this occasion, related to the writer, which served as a confirmation of its accuracy as it was reported at the time.

James Miller McKim, the young Presbyterian minister from Columbia, moved very shortly to Philadelphia, after signing that constitution. He became an active agent of the anti-slavery movement in Philadelphia, forming anti-slavery societies throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania, and becoming practically the Philadelphia editor of the "National Anti-Slavery Standard," the organ which was published under the auspices of the National Society.

By a singular coincidence, the two first mentioned, Friends Coates and Whitson, were both members of the Sadsbury Monthly Meeting of the Society of Hicksite Quakers, and lie buried in the same old graveyard, within forty feet of each other.

Here let it be stated that at that time, although Garrison had started his "Liberator," in 1831, two years previous, bearing for its motto, "Our Country is the World; Our Countrymen all Mankind," it was not until some years afterward that he raised his standard of "No Union with Slaveholders," and declared that the Constitution of the United States was "a covenant with death and a league with hell."

Political Organization.

The declaration of principles of the American Anti-slavery Society of that time was rather confined to a strong moral appeal to the Christian people throughout the United States and the world to bear their non-compromising testimony against slavery; that their entire confidence was in the righteousness of their cause, and the over-

ruling province of God; that they would circulate, unsparingly and extensively, anti-slavery tracts and periodicals; that they would endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in their righteous cause; that they would arouse the conscience of the church to its duty on the great question and appeal simply to the Supreme Ruler of the universe for the rectitude of their intention, as their fathers had done in that same city fifty-seven years before.

In a few years, as the growth of the anti-slavery sentiment in Lancaster county became more manifest, the advocates and defenders of the institution became also more violent and intense in their denunciation of Abolitionists.

In 1844 quite a respectable minority vote was polled for James G. Birney, the "Free-soil" candidate for the Presidency. His supporters were rather severely censured here as elsewhere by the "Old Line Whigs" on the one side for causing the defeat of Henry Clay when their vote would have elected him, and on the other by a small faction of Garrisonians, who had begun to indorse the full measure of Garrison's platform, and abstained from voting entirely, holding that, as the Federal Constitution recognized slavery, no man could participate in the elections under it without becoming himself a party to the guilty contract and suffering defilement thereby. The same conditions existed largely in 1848, when Martin Van Buren led a distinct "Free-soil" party movement as a candidate for the Presidency and carried with him a slight sprinkling of Democratic followers, with the difference, however, that General Taylor, the Whig candidate, was elected.

The church in Lancaster county, as throughout the nation, was convulsed

more or less by the question that would never "down." This was owing not only to the varying positions which its national assemblies had taken, but also to the individual and local feelings and sentiments of its various pastors and congregations. The Methodist Church as a body throughout the county might be said to have leaned rather to the anti-slavery side of the question, as doubtless its members felt they could not consistently call themselves followers of John Wesley and apologize for or defend "the institution;" but their system of frequent change of pastors left no distinct personality in the county opposing the institution vigorously that I now recall. The old Chestnut Level Presbyterian Church in Drumore had for its pastor for many years Lindley C. Rutter, who proclaimed with no uncertain sound his opposition to slavery. He received the usual maledictions and contempt of a large portion of the community, even including some of his own congregation. At the Colerain Presbyterian Church the pastor of the church, along in the latter forties or early fifties, had taken the position that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was justified in its declaration that the ownership of slaves constituted no sufficient bar to Christian communion and fellowship in the Church. From this position some of its members, of strong character and conviction, led by James Martin and Abner Davis, Sr., withdrew from its membership and erected a church of their own near Andrews' Bridge, known as the free Presbyterian Church, where there was maintained a separate minister, and service held until after the ratification of the Thirteenth amendment. Rev. W. F. P. Noble, of Sadsbury township, a young

Presbyterian minister, a scholar, and afterwards the author of two very readable books on religious topics, withdrew for a considerable time from the ministry, feeling that his conscience would not allow him to be as subservient to the institution of slavery as his congregation and the general church of the land expected him to be—especially after the weak position the church assumed in denouncing the Lovejoy outrage, in which the victim was killed by a pro-slavery mob in Alton, Ill., in 1837, for having opposed slavery in a very mild and constitutional way in his paper.

Friends and Seceders.

"Father" William Easton, of Smyrna, pastor of the old Octoraro United Presbyterian Church, with all his orthodoxy, must be credited as one of those who refused to bend the knee to the behests of the slave power when the most of his congregation were anything but enthusiastic in their opposition to it. However, I have very distinct recollections of one stern old Calvinist and Abolitionist, Mr. Benj. Carter, of Sadsbury, who belonged to the United Presbyterian congregation. He went home from a "John Brown meeting" at Smyrna in great disgust. It had been called on the day of the execution of Brown, to utter a protest against what the assemblage considered a crime against humanity. Carter found at that meeting only two members of his own church; the rest of the audience was composed largely of what he would have termed in all honesty and sincerity heretics—"Hicksite" Quakers and infidels, two young school teachers of the neighborhood and a few other leading Republicans, such as Elwood Griest and Samuel Slokom, etc. Mr. Carter's orthodoxy.

which as already intimated would have passed muster with Calvin at any time, began seriously to debate with himself whether some of those dangerous Quakers who had dared so much for the cause of liberty might not have a fair chance for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven; at least his views in the question became so modified that he afterwards married a very estimable Quaker lady for a second wife, and I never understood that he regretted the contract.

The more unobtrusive and German denominations throughout the county, I believe, never in any way apologized for slavery as religious congregations, though they never became very pronounced in their opposition to it. Even the Friends, or Quakers, who boast, and truthfully, too, that they were the first distinct religious organization in America to positively pronounce the dictum that no person interested in the ownership of slave property could be admitted to membership in their society, did not all of them, I am constrained to say, spend sleepless nights devising measures to free the bondman or to aid a fleeing fugitive in his flight. I think it is not great error to state that even the monthly meetings of Sadsbury, Penn Hill and Eastland did not always give that spontaneous welcome to Lucretia Mott which now appears upon the surface of a casual reading; especially I recall the fact that her own particular "meeting" in Philadelphia made strenuous efforts at one time to have her disowned from membership, the ostensible reason being her religious tenets, while the real reason was her persistent anti-slavery discourses. So it would appear that the churches of Lancaster county, while endeavoring, no doubt, to follow the light as they saw it, cannot be

credited as a body with giving a whole-souled, vigorous support to the abolition or anti-slavery movement.

The Underground Railway.

Incident to the Abolition movement in Lancaster county might be mentioned the "Underground Railroad," an organization of which possibly there was more spontaneous action than systematic arrangement. Magnified it is now, perhaps, into proportions that never existed, and with a history, perhaps, impossible for any one to write with accuracy, for the simple reason that I doubt if any one knows it entirely. The common idea that it was composed of a set of people who assisted escaped fugitives in their flight to Canada, or elsewhere, is doubtless correct; likewise that it had its origin and main spring in the sentiment of strong men of conscience, who openly admitted they never would obey the behests of a law that commanded them to return human beings to bondage, and recognized no such things as property in man, and who considered they were performing their duty to conscience and to God when they aided a fugitive to escape from his servitude. In that movement they, no doubt, incidentally and at various times were encouraged and even assisted by humane men of more conservative views, who would professedly say they would obey such laws, but secretly would aid the bondman in his flight to freedom.

Mrs. Stowe's Democratic State Senator of Ohio, in her great novel of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," who hurried home from the Legislature to tell his constituents that he had voted for the law providing more stringent measures, for the rendition of fugitive slaves who escaped from Kentucky, and then hitched up his carriage

at midnight to take a slave mother and her babe ten miles across the country in her flight to Canada, was probably not an exceptional case. But as even the extreme ultra-Abolitionists did not publish from the house tops every philanthropic yet illegal act they performed in that direction, it is, I might repeat, a little difficult to state many things with great accuracy.

A general impression seems now to exist, founded, no doubt, on strong circumstantial evidence, that there were three or more marked or distinct channels through which fugitive slaves from the border escaped into Pennsylvania, and were aided by that mysterious agency, the "Underground Railroad," to Canada. One might be said to have had its course from the Eastern shore of Maryland and Delaware, coming up through southern Chester county, and incidentally, along the border of Lancaster, and some have the idea that an old gentleman by the name of Thomas Garrett, in the city of Wilmington, had much to do with giving them direction to their friends in Pennsylvania.

Another channel seems to have crossed the Susquehanna from the western shore of Maryland, at a point as far south as Conowingo Ferry, now bridge, and made entrance into the borders of Pennsylvania through southern York and Lancaster counties. Those who came by this course found succor and aid from the Smiths, of Drumore, the older generation of the Brosiuses, and John N. Russel,and in the valley east of Quarryville from the Bushongs, the Moores, the Jacksons and others.

Another flow,which came from probably a little further west, or through the main body of York, Adams and Franklin counties, found their outlet into Lancaster county at Columbia,

where some prominent citizens are supposed to have been in the secrets; as, for instance, the Wrights, probably the descendants of the Wrights after whom the town of Wrightsville takes its name, Steve Smith, a one-eyed colored man, who had made considerable money himself in the lumber business, and it is altogether possible that our old friend 'Squire Samuel Evans, of Columbia; the Summys, of Marietta, and some others, who afterwards became fairly prominent in Lancaster county politics, knew more about such movement than they always would have cared to tell.

One thing seems pretty well understood by this time, that this stream flowed from Columbia eastward toward the residence of one Daniel Gibbons an old Friend who resided near Bird-in-Hand, the grandfather of our present very brilliant literary lady, Mary Anna Gibbons Brubaker, residing at the present time on the old homestead, from whom we may expect at the next meeting an elaboration of this stirring narrative. From this point the fugitives were generally given a name which they were told to assume, always adhere to and never divulge the fact that they had been known by any other name.

Here perhaps I might digress far enough to tell a story of one old negro, Samuel Hopkins, who lived long in this county, among the last survivors of the Christiana riot, and not unknown to some of the people of the Lancaster County Historical Society. Sammy was once asked by the late Hon. Marriott Brosius and the writer to tell us what his real name was, the argument being put to him: "Why, slavery has been abolished for thirty years, you are a free man, an old soldier of your country, and no man dare

harm a hair of your head—why don't you tell us where you were from, and what your name was?" The old darky, with a look of sobriety and seriousness, stammered, hesitated for a moment and seemed about to tell us, when he finally said: "Well, I'll just tell you, man, I did promise old Daniel Gibbons that I would never tell that to anybody as long as I lived, and some how or other I had rather not." We both looked at him approvingly and gave him words of commendation for his decision; and yet many persons could not help but feel that the fidelity with which he stuck to his trust in that case was wonderfully in contrast with many of his latter day promises when he became a rural statesman of Eden township.

"The Kidnapers."

As the converse to the "Underground Railroad" might be mentioned briefly the seemingly organized bands of kidnapers or slave-hunters who lived along the border of Maryland and Pennsylvania and followed the business of recapturing escaped fugitives from Virginia and Maryland, or kidnaping by force and violence free negroes who had been born and reared in Pennsylvania all their lives. This practice, which existed for fully two decades before the outbreak of the Civil War, continued up to as late as the winter of 1860, when a free negro by the name of Brown was stolen from his home one night not far from Mt. Vernon, in Salisbury township, near the Chester county line, and spirited through as far as Baltimore, where he was discovered barely in time to prevent his being sold at auction to planters or traders in the cotton States of the far South. One J. Williams Thorne, a man of strong personality in that neighborhood and largely

instrumental in the rescuing of the colored man, and in the conviction of the kidnaper, which was finally effected in the Lancaster county Court—had his barn consigned to flames through the hands of the kidnapers about twelve months later, in the winter of 1861, when the States were already passing secession ordinances. Strange as it may seem, to not only the younger generation of this day, but to others, when Mr. Thorne went over to Parkesburg a few weeks later, to take a glimpse at Abraham Lincoln, as he passed through on his road to Washington to be inaugurated, and Thorne made a little impromptu speech to the crowd there assembled, saying "that freedom was national, and slavery is sectional," he was practically hooted down. The Brown incident is the last one of kidnaping, however, that I recall before the firing on Fort Sumter, which seemed by common understanding to close the business.

Those who are anxious for a closer insight into the events of the slave-hunting era might possibly get some side-light by reading George Alfred Townsend's novel, "Katy of Cotochtin," in which it is quite evident that a prominent national figure, Thaddeus Stevens, is delineated on the one side of the question in the character "Old Mr. Quantrill," and a notorious band of slave-catchers along the border of the Cumberland Valley, the Logan brothers, are named outright without concealment. Of these men one was pretty generally known to the people of this community, as he removed to Lancaster shortly after the Civil War, where he lived until the time of his death, and who, whatever change of heart he may have had on the business of catching and sending negroes to slavery for gain, I believe, was always quite content with his record as being

the captor of Captain Cook, John Brown's chief lieutenant at Harper's Ferry.

The Christiana Riot.

The old "Gap gang," as it was known throughout this county, was not immediately responsible for conveying the information to Gorsuch and Dr.Price as to the whereabouts of their slaves, the attempt to capture whom and take them back to slavery under the prescribed form of the law as it then existed brought about the local tragedy, the Christiana riot. It became at once of national significance, and its sixtieth anniversary quite fitly is to be observed under the auspices of this society next September.

The individual who did convey that information, I believe, was never distinctly connected with the Gap gang, and perhaps charity suggests that his name should not be mentioned even here; possibly he was too great a coward for the leaders of those bold adventurers and desperadoes to ever take into their confidence. Suffice it to say that he went to Philadelphia some time after the riot to reprimand J. Miller McKim for publishing his name in the Anti-Slavery Standard. To him Mr. McKim replied: "Then I understand, sir, you have come here to discipline me for publishing your name in that capacity, and not to deny the charge?"It is needless to say that practically ended their interview, and perhaps it is a good place also for me to let the curtain fall, except that possibly I may be allowed a word by way of general recapitulation.

Now that we are living more than a half century from the time most of these scenes were being enacted, as they were but the preparatory acts in the great controversy which afterwards convulsed this nation, it might

not be amiss to pause for a brief moment and consider the actual, natural and logical causes. Large portions, perhaps, of the present generation may have heard somewhat vaguely, and indistinctly, of Wm. H Seward's "irrepressible conflict" speech. Let us intrude upon your patience long enough to give you the great pregnant truths uttered in a few sentences thereof:

"These antagonistic systems, Freedom and Slavery, are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results. Shall I tell you what this collision means? They who think that it is accidental, unneccessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and, therefore, ephemeral, mistake the case altogether. It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will,sooner or later,become either entirely a slaveholding nation or entirely a free-labor nation. Either the cotton and rice fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts for legitimate merchandise alone, or the rye fields and wheat fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves, and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men.

"It is the failure to apprehend this great truth that induces so many unsuccessful attempts at compromise between the slave and free States, and it is the existence of this great fact that renders all such pretended compromises when made vain and ephemeral.

Never did human insight forecast the future more clearly or in more classical and well-chosen language—

not even Napoleon when he said that "Europe would ultimately either be all Cossack or all Republic," nor Webster, when he said "there can be no such thing as peaceable secession." These things are stated simply to remind young teachers, writers and university extension lecturers that now, while living in the universal era of good feeling, when all sensible people have joined hands across the bloody chasm and bear no malice nor hatred to any one, it is well enough still not to pervert the truth or mislead the rising generation. I know that the question of the general powers of the Federal Government and of the rights specially reserved to the States has always been a somewhat perplexing and intricate question, upon which parties were very early formed, and that it is so to a great extent to this day, but it seems almost impossible to believe that those questions alone would have produced convulsion or civil war without the existence of the Institution of Slavery and the humane popular impulse to exterminate it from the life of a nation dedicated to the freedom of men.

Minutes of the March Meeting.

Lancaster, Pa., March 3, 1911.

That interest in matters historical is growing in this city was evidenced by the very large attendance at the regular meeting this evening of the Lancaster County Historical Society held in its room in the Smith free library building. The announcement that a most entertaining paper, third in a series on the slavery question being read before the society, would be presented had the effect of entirely filling the society's room, and, in fact, many persons were compelled to stand, so large was the audience. The meeting was one of the best held by the society for many months. The full programme prepared for the evening could not be carried out. Arrangements had been made to have as the guest of the evening aged Peter Woods, of near Bartville, who is the sole survivor of the famous Christiana riots, the sixtieth anniversary of which the Historical Society will celebrate in September. Mr. Woods was to give his personal experiences of the riot, but he was prevented from attending by sickness. Arrangements will be made to have him present at some future meeting.

In the absence of the President, Mr. George Steinman, Mr. F. R. Diffenderffer, one of the Vice Presidents, occupied the chair. Two new members were elected, Miss Mary Martin and Miss Ida MacMillan, of this city, and the applications of Miss Mary Fritchey and Miss Martha Bowman were received.

The librarian, Charles T. Steigerwalt, announced the following contributions since the last meeting:

American Catholic Historical Society, December, 1910; Pennsylvania-German, February, 1911; Annual Report, Hamilton Library Association, of Carlisle, for 1910; Pamphlet of Memorial Services in Memory of Very Rev. Bernard Keenan; Proceeding of American Philosophical Society; Report of Librarian of Congress, 1910; American and English Genealogies From Library of Congress, 1910; from Bureau of American Ethnology, Handbook of American Indians, Volume II.; Pennsylvania-German, Linden Hall Echo, International Conciliation, for January; Bulletins New York Public Library, Carnegie Library of Pittsburg, and Grand Rapids Public Library; Catalogue of Autograph Letters and Historical Documents of C. T. Steigerwalt; Bulletin from Library of Congress; The Wilderness Trail, three volumes, by purchase.

The librarian was ordered to purchase Dr. Johann David Schoepf's Travels In the Confederation, 1783-1784.

The paper of the evening was prepared by request by a resident of Christiana, and was read by Mr. W. U. Hensel. The subject was "The Early Abolitionists of Lancaster County," and it is a most valuable contribution to the history of slavery and Lancaster county's part in the great issue.

Commenting on the paper that had been read, Mr. Hensel said he regretted that Peter Woods could not be present, as announced. He is likely the sole survivor of the Christiana Riot, and certainly the only person living in Lancaster county who ever had been indicted for the high crime of treason against the United States.

He was the subject of indictment No. 27, growing out of the so-called Christiana Riot, and was one of the large group of colored men who were incarcerated in Philadelphia for months, and who sat manacled all through the Hanway trial with Lucretia Mott at the head of their file and wearing red, white and blue neckties she had knit for them. Peter lives near Nine Points, and is a much respected colored man; he is a little stiff, but will be thawed out for the September celebration. Samuel Hopkins, referred to in the paper, was a characteristic negro fugitive slave; he used to own a corn cutter that he insisted was used in the fight, and it has been preserved and will be exhibited.

The sixty-year celebration is not intended to be a glorification of either party to the tragedy, nor to be a partisan memorial of the burning issue out of which it grew; but a popular historical study of a local event that attained national significance. The speaker showed how Governor Johnson, then a Whig candidate for re-election, passed over the railroad and through Christiana on his way to Philadelphia, shortly after Gorsuch was killed; and though many passengers on his train went in to see the slain victim of the affray, Governor Johnson did not appear sufficiently interested in its significance and this was urged against him and helped to defeat him. For a day or two the Philadelphia newspapers and the press of the country generally treated the event lightly; but it soon attained great proportions. Governor Johnson was fiercely assailed in open letters by the Gorsuch family; a mass meeting of protest was called in Independence Square by eminent Democrats to voice popular indignation; the

Governor of Maryland declared in an address to President Fillmore that if the citizens of this Commonwealth could not be protected in their stolen property that State would secede. Meantime,squads of troops, battalions of marines and scores of federal deputies marshal scoured the eastern end of the county and kept it in a ferment of excitement. All culminated in the great treason trial which lasted from November 30, 1851, until about December 14—John M. Read speaking for three days for the defense.

The celebration, therefore, will be significant and notable. Ex-Vice President Pugh, of the P. R. R., and State Senator W. C. Sproul, who were born in the vicinity; Congressmen Griest, of Lancaster, and Butler, of Chester, will act with an efficient citizens' committee from Christiana, Gap, Atglen and the Chester Valley—all working under direction of the Historical Society, to make it a success. An eligible site for a suitable marker is offered and a fit place will be found to hold the exercises of the occasion, which will include an elaborate history, an oration, poem and the presentation of the descendants of many of the participants.

Dr. J. W. Houston, who lived in the vicinity of Christiana at the time of the riot, added some interesting personal reminiscences, which proved most entertaining.

After some further discussion of the subject the society adjourned.